

# CLOAK-AND- -DAGGER BEHIND THE SCENES

After twenty years of silence, a former Government scientist describes the diabolical workings of our World War II espionage.

BY STANLEY P. LOVELL

The war had been on for six months, and was not going well for us, when I was introduced to Gen. (then a colonel) William J. (Wild Bill) Donovan. Dr. Vannevar Bush, my chief in the Office of Scientific Research and Development, had recently distributed to all his staff a special problem:

"You are all alone on a rubber raft, about to land on a German-held coast. Your mission is to destroy a well-guarded enemy radio tower. It has armed guards, searchlights and police dogs. You can have only one weapon, but it can be anything you can suggest. Describe that specific weapon."

I submitted, "I want a flashless, completely silent submachine gun."

My answer won first prize in Doctor Bush's contest. That is why Wild Bill had sent for me. He looked up as I entered his office and said, "Doctor Moriarty! He's the man I want on my staff. I think you're it."

"Do I look to be as evil a character as Professor Moriarty in the Sherlock Holmes stories?" I asked.

"I don't give a damn how you look," Donovan answered. "I want every devilish, subtle device and every underhanded operation possible to use against the Germans and Japs by the Underground in all occupied countries. There's only one condition. You must promise to wait twenty years before you tell what you've been responsible for."

That is how I became director of research and development for Donovan's embryonic Office of Strategic Services—just twenty years ago. And from then on General Donovan called me "Doctor Moriarty."

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Now, although there are some matters which must still remain secret, I feel free to reveal—for the first time, I believe—some of the special devices we cooked up for spies and saboteurs to use behind enemy lines.

From 1942 to 1945 we used our scientific knowledge and all manner of unorthodox materials to develop precisely the kind of "devilish, subtle devices" Donovan had asked for. Some were undramatic—the forgery of passports, ration books, identification papers and foreign currency, for example. Some were rather funny, at least to us. And some, of course, were weapons of death and destruction.

By mid-1943 we had perfected some twenty special devices, ranging from delay firing systems and incendiaries down to a simple firecracker device we called "Hedy Lamarr," because my young officers told me that Miss Lamarr created a panic wherever she went. When you pulled a small wire loop on the gadget, it simulated the screeching Doppler effect of a falling Nazi bomb, ending in a deafening roar—but all completely harmless. We made it for our spies who might be trapped in a theater or a hotel lobby. By activating "Hedy," the agent might escape in the turmoil.

General Donovan and I gave lectures before many military groups. I vividly recall one on August 28, 1943, before the Joint Chiefs of Staff. After General Donovan's talk on OSS objectives, he asked me to demonstrate several of our simpler devices. I showed our "booby traps," our incendiaries and other devices, and I explained the need for "Hedy Lamarr." As I spoke, I activated one and dropped it casually into a metal wastebasket. "Hedy" interrupted me by suddenly shrieking. Then came the deafening bang. To my surprise I saw generals and admirals clawing to get out through the room's single door.